



**It's like a**  
**WHOLE OTHER COUNTRY**

# TEXAS TOURISM FY 2016 MARKETING PLAN

*Canada*

## OVERVIEW:

Canada is the largest market for travel and tourism to the United States by both visitation and travel spending. Popular activities that motivate Canadians to travel to Texas include: shopping, visiting a historic site, visiting a museum or art gallery, sightseeing, visiting a zoo or aquarium, attending an event (including sports, a play, concert, festival or fair). Beaches, cruising and other year round Texas outdoor activities provide escape from Canadian winters while encouraging longer stays.

Canada's population is expected to grow to 37.3 million by 2018 (increase of 5.7%) and also age during the next four years. Both will have a positive influence on outbound leisure travel through 2018. The direction of the Canadian economy remains uncertain as oil prices and the U.S./Canada exchange rate fluctuates. The Canadian dollar is currently hovering around U.S. \$0.80 and forecasters are predicting the Canadian dollar to stay devalued for about the next two years. With respect to travel to U.S. destinations, stressing value for vacation dollar will be a paramount message to promote. The lower Canadian dollar will affect not only exchange rate sensitive outbound travelers, but other travelers as many of the costs for tour operators, airlines and travel insurers are in U.S. dollars.

The majority of Canadian visitors to Texas destinations fly versus drive. Continuing as a positive market development in 2014 and 2015 was WestJet's second year of service between Calgary and DFW. WestJet is Canada's second largest Canadian air carrier and ninth largest airline in North America by passengers carried. The continuation of their direct service from Calgary will have a positive effect on driving interest in Texas from Western Canada and increase arrivals to destinations throughout the state. Earlier this year, WestJet announced that it will launch Calgary – Houston service in September 2015. Air Canada also started Toronto – Austin daily non-stop service May 18, 2015 which is a wonderful complement to the airline's existing non-stop service into DFW and Houston.

## VISITOR DATA:

The most recent estimates available for Canada show that an estimated 503,100 travelers visited Texas in 2014 and generated nearly \$454 million in direct spending. Estimates for Canadian travel to Texas were made available in the fall of 2015 from Statistics Canada. Ontario is the largest province by population in Canada as well as the largest source market within the country for Texas travelers. Travel from Canada to Texas is forecasted to increase by 20.8% by 2020.

CANADA TO TEXAS (2014)
Visitor Volume: 503,100
Direct Travel Spending: \$454 million
Avg Nights: 11.78

Arrivals from Canada to the United States in 2014 were estimated at 23.00 million, a decrease of 2% compared to the previous year. The decline follows four years of record-breaking visitation and was strongly influenced by a decline in one-night auto visitors who may have been influenced by currency depreciations. Canada was the largest market for international arrivals for the country accounting for almost a third of all arrivals. Direct spending from Canada was estimated at \$26.3 billion, a decrease of 4% from the previous year. Travel from Canada to the United States is forecasted to increase by 14.8% by 2020 with an annual growth rate of 3%.



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## MARKETING ACTIVITIES:

Texas Tourism's strategy for Fiscal Year 2016 is to promote Texas as a destination of infinite exciting and inspirational vacation possibilities; a place where everything is possible, endless experiences for every type of Canadian traveler. We will develop a creative and proactive program of trade based activities that will enhance the position of Texas in the minds of key trade and distribution networks. We will also ensure that Texas is prominently positioned with the travel trade and key distribution networks in market. Our program will be primarily focused on developing effective co-op partnerships, programs and promotions in tourism distribution channels, sales programs and training efforts.

We will focus our resources on the primary markets in Canada: Ontario, Western Canada (prime provincial targets – Alberta and British Columbia) and Quebec. Secondary markets include Manitoba and Eastern/Atlantic Canada.

According to the recent visitor profile study conducted by Strategic Marketing & Research Insights (SMARInsights), top activities that motivated Canadians to visit Texas were shopping, historic sites/attractions, art/culture, music/entertainment/nightlife, culinary/dining, parks and beaches. Image attributes that are existing strengths important to promote are hospitality/friendly people, value and family vacations.

The SMARInsights study also showed Canadians continue to use traditional travel agents, search engines, hotel websites, travel review sites, OTA's and city websites when planning trips. The Texas travel planning period varies to some degree by province, with Ontario residents requiring less time and Alberta/other province residents planning further ahead.

We will focus on key messages, themes and key motivational drivers and reinforce them in our promotions, webinars, pro-active outreach and travel agent booking incentives. Our tour operator partners would complement our themes in their trade communication during the period including emails, sales calls and FAM trips.

Sales and Media Mission:		
<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Texas on Tour Sales & Media Blitz	Nov 9-13, 2015	Hamilton, London & Barrie
NXNE North by Northeast	June 2016	Toronto, Canada
Travel Trade Consumer & Shows:		
<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Salon International Tourisme Voyages	Oct 23 – 25, 2015	Montreal, Canada
Maritime Travel Conference	Nov 20-21, 2015	Halifax, Canada
Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show	Feb 19 – 21, 2016	Toronto, Canada
Outdoor Adventure & Travel Show	Mar 19 – 20, 2016	Calgary, Canada
The Ottawa Travel & Vacation Show	April 9 – 10, 2016	Ottawa, Canada
Cruise 3 Sixty	June 1 – 6, 2016	Vancouver, Canada
Cruise 3 Sixty Secondary Event	June 1, 2016	Vancouver, Canada